

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1212

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 1487

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SP, PO

SUBJ: SPANISH PROTEST PORTUGUESE RADIO ATTACKS

1. ACCORDING TO MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR EUROPEAN AFFAIRS, SPANISH AMB LISBON MADE INFORMAL PROTEST TO SOARES ON FEBRUARY 24 ABOUT INFLAMMATORY GALICIAN LANGUAGE RADIO BROADCAST BY RADIO CLUB PORTUGUES IN OPORTO DURING SERIES OF LABOR DISTURBANCES IN VIGO EARLIER THAT WEEK. SPANISH CHARGED THAT OPORTO STATION HAD CARRIED SERIES OF DIATRIBES AGAINST LABOR PROBLEMS OF SPECIFIC SPANISH FIRMS IN THE VIGO AREA, EVEN DENOUNCING SOME OF THEM BY NAME ALONG WITH SOME OF KEY MANAGERIAL OFFICIALS.

2. ACCORDING TO AGUIRRE, SOARES DEPLORED INCIDENT AND ATTRIBUTED IT TO WHAT HE CALLED STEADY RADICALIZATION OF PORTUGAL'S POLITICAL PROCESS. SOARES REPORTEDLY STRESSED THT RADIO CLUB PORTUGUES WAS NOT A GOVERNMENT TATION AND ITS COMMENTS ON LABOR PROBLEMS IN VIGO, WHICH PRODUCED CONSIDERABLE TENSION IN IDLED 8000 WORKERS IN CITY, WERE NOT GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED BUT THE WORK OF YOUNG RADICALS THAT HAVE INFILTRATED THE MEDIA. SOARES
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SAID THAT THE MILITARY GOVERNOR OF OPORTO HAD BEEN

ASKED TO LOOK INTO THE MATTER AND TAKE ACTION TO SEE THAT INCIDENTS ARE NOT REPEATED.

3. AGUIRRE SAID HE SO FAR HAD ONLY VAGUE REPORTS ABOUT ANOTHER PORTUGUESE STATION BROADCASTING TO SPAIN AND TO EUROPE IN SPANISH AND NEEDED DETAILS. POLITICAL COUNSELOR CONFIRMED THAT SUCH A PROGRAM WAS NOW BEING PICKED UP REGULARLY ON EMISORA NACIONAL. TAKING NOTE OF THESE DETAILS, AGUIRRE REPEATED PAST STATEMENTS THAT SPAIN WANTS TO AVOID CONFRONTATIONS WITH PORTUGAL ON BROADCASTING ISSUE BUT THAT AGAIN PORTUGUESE HAD BEEN GIVEN TO UNDERSTAND THAT SPAIN HAS RADIO COVERAGE TO REPLY IN KIND WITH POLITICAL DIATRIBES IF PORTUGUESSE GO TOO FAR.

4. COMMENT: SOMEWHAT SURPRISING THAT MFA OFFICIAL WITH PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR PORTUGAL HAD ONLY VAGUE KNOWLEDGE OF SPANISH LANGUAGE POLITICAL BROADCASTS ORIGINATING THERE. SPANISH NORMALLY KEEP THEMSELVES WELL INFORMED OF POTENTIALLY TROUBLESOME POLITICAL BROADCAST ORIGINATING IN ALL NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES. SPANISH, FOR EXAMPLE, SECRETLY MADE PROTEST AT QUAI OVER THREE-HOUR ANTI-FRANCO PROGRAM CONDUCTED BY SPANISH EXILES ON "RADIO FRANCE CULTURE", EVEN THOUGH PROGRAM NOT HEARD IN SPAIN. ADDING TO MYSTERY IS COMMENT BY DIRECTOR GENERAL OF NORTH AMERICAN AFFAIRS, WHO STATED HE UNDERSTOOD MFA WAS AWARE OF SPANISH LANGUAGE POLITICAL BROADCASTS BUT WOULD NOT MAKE ISSUE OF THEM SINCE THEY WERE NOT BEAMED TO SPAIN. WE WILL CONTINUE TO PROBE THIS ONE FOR CLARIFICATION.
EATON

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